(b) the number of recognized training centres throughout the country for the training of these technicians;

(c) the programmes being implemented by Government in rural areas to create awareness among people in this regard; and

(d) the percentage of reservations available to handicapped persons in Government jobs on the basis of various types of disability?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) As per report of the Rehabilitation Council of India, there are 66,738 registered rehabilitation professionals and personnel and 160 recognized training centres functioning in the country with a total capacity of 3200 admissions per year;

(c) Government has started awareness generation compaign in selected districts in a phased manner. In addition, there is a provision of counseling on the role of prevention, early intervention and rehabilitation in rural areas by the Viklang Bandhu who is a motivated village level volunteer. The National Institutes and Composite Rehabilitation Centres also run short programmes and distribute publicity material for this purpose.

(d) There is a provision of reservation in identified posts in Government and semi Government institutions to the extent of 3 per cent of vacancies per persons with disabilities of which one per cent each shall be for persons suffering form (i) blindness or low vision; (ii) hearing impairment and (iii) locomotors disability or cerebral palsy.

Inclusion of 'Thachar' Community in SC list

1914. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to FREER TO ANSWER to starred question 572 given in the Rajya Sabha on 6th May, 2002 and state:

(a) whether Government have received any comments from the State Government of Kerala regarding the inclusion of Thachar community in the Scheduled Caste list; and

(b) if so the action taken thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The comments of the Government of Kerala for inclusion of Thachar (other than Carpenter) in the list of Scheduled Castes of Kerala have been sent to the Registrar General of India for their comments as per approved modalities.

Demand of disabled rights group

1915. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Disabled Rights Group had placed twelve demands to the Minister of State in Prime Minister's Office in May this year for extention of various facilities and concessions to physically, visually and also mentally impaired persons, including tax concession on equipments for their aid;

(b) if so, the details of their demands;

(c) whether the same were accepted in principle; and

(d) if so, the decision taken thereon and the steps taken to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (d) The Disabled Rights Group (DRG) submitted their demands to the Minister of State in Prime Minister's Office on 6th May, 2002, The demands cover a wide range of issues such as raising of limit of income tax exemption for disabled persons, no taxes on production and import of aids & appliances meant for disabled persons, incentives to private sector to promote employment, shifting office of Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCD) from NOIDA to Delhi, all facilities/concessions given to persons with orthopedic, visual and hearing disabled to be extended to mentally impaired, one per cent reservation for people with mental and/or developmental disabilities in C&D category of jobs, standardization of Indian Sign Language, further revision of the list of identified posts for persons with disabilities, abolishing Office of CCD and constituting a Disability Commission, passage of amendments to Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995, shifting 'Special Education' from Ministry of Social